

Silver Flag story continued...

resources, both technical and non-technical and our information flow to CCC was better than they had seen in the past. In fact, the way we did our jobs at Silver Flag will be now used as standard practice in all future Silver Flag exercises," said 1Lt. Ronald Hawkins, 179th readiness officer.

"The 179th civil engineers, firefighters, operations, personnel and services folks all did an outstanding job during this exercise. I had two separate active duty commanders come up and tell me that we had an outstanding group of personnel...that it was apparent the 179th really understood their wartime mission," Williams said. "Our folks really stood out and they made me proud."

Another reason to wear your safety belt



Fred Farmer / AP

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Jan. 28 - A teenager was catapulted at least 25 feet in the air during an auto accident but grabbed onto overhead utility wires like an action hero and dangled for about 20 minutes before a rescue crew brought him down by ladder.

Reprinted from the Associated Press at the request of the 179th Safety Office.

Error fuels base station blaze

Story by: James Coburn

37th Training Wing Public Affairs

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I know many of you think safety warnings about cell phones/transmitting devices or ignition sources near fuel are bogus. So did the retired tech. sgt. below. In this case the fire was simply started by static electricity. Please take the time to read the article. (Please turn off your cell phones near fuel vapor sources and be aware of the warnings nears gas and fuel sources. Don't open or close your doors while refueling. Put gas cans on the ground.)

Lackland Fire Chief J.L. Ball said a placard on the gasoline pumps warns motorists to put gas cans on the ground to fill them, but people might not notice them.

In a video taken by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service store's security camera, four bystanders are shown frantically using their own clothing to help put out the flames burning on the man's gasoline-soaked pants legs and shoes.

Tech. Sgt. Ed Jones, a Warrior Week instructor and one of the bystanders, removed his battle dress uniform top and wrapped it around the man's legs to help extinguish the flames, but they kept re-igniting. Thinking quickly, he pulled a window cleaner reservoir from a rack at the pump and poured the water on the man's legs.

A shopette mechanic rushed the man to nearby Wilford Hall Medical Center in his pickup. Jones, who accompanied the man, also was treated for minor burns he received as he smothered flames.

Safety officials long have warned people not to fill gas cans sitting inside vehicles or in truck beds because of the danger of gasoline vapors being ignited by static electricity.

Another hazard reported recently is getting back into a car and not touching a metal ground before returning to the refueling nozzle and causing a static

electricity spark.

In a video of the incident, the man is seen standing in the bed of his pickup as he fills five 5-gallon gas cans (three plastic and two metal) over a period of several minutes before a flash fire erupts.

Lt. Col. Brian Mullin, a former safety officer at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, is seen driving up to an adjacent pump and starting to fill his vehicle when he notices what the man is doing just before the fire.

Mullin, now undergoing instructor pilot training at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, said the retiree "did one of the classic things you shouldn't do ... refueling external gas cans (above ground) with plastic or rubber shoes on. This is an extremely textbook case of static electricity igniting an instantaneous fire.

"I was moving my lips to tell him, 'Sir, don't do that,' when the first flame started in the back of his truck," added Mullin.

"I saw the flame, and I told him to jump," he said. "He dropped the hose, which sprayed gas all over the truck. I told him to jump and run, which would have been really a good thing to do, but instead, he tried to throw the 5-gallon can that he had just fueled out the back to get it away from his truck, and that started the whole area on fire.

"So now he's on fire, the back of the truck's on fire, and the can that just hit the ground started a big fire behind the truck."

The man ran between the burning truck and the pump toward the store before he dropped and rolled on the pavement.

Mullin ran after the man, ripping off his two T-shirts to beat out the burning clothes, "but they did not do much good because they (caught) on fire," he said.

Jones ran to use his BDU top on the flames, and another man and a woman also helped the retiree.

Firefighters arrived on scene within two minutes and extinguished the blazing truck five minutes after arriving.